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Region 3

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Blades Groundwater Site Public Meeting to Discuss Proposal to the National Priorities List

On December 5, EPA will hold a public meeting at the Blades Fire Hall in Blades, DE, to discuss EPA's proposal of Blades Groundwater to the National Priorities List. A public comment period is open from November 8 to January 7, 2020. There is ongoing, successful treatment of the Blades public water supply and residential wells to remove metals, PFOA, and PFOS from the water supply at the treatment plants. The City of Blades' drinking water continues to meet Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Act standards, as shared annually in its water quality reports. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources (DNREC), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and the Delaware Department of Health will attend to answer site and health related questions.

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Office of International and Tribal Affairs

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Office of Research and Development

Hot Topics

Federal Lead Action Plan

This week ORD is hosting the Federal Lead Action Plan: Interagency Lead Research Workshop. The goal of the workshop is to identify opportunities for federal agencies to collectively share critical lead research designed to guide decisions on public health practices to reduce children's lead exposure and associated health risks. The first day of the two-day Interagency lead research workshop provided an excellent venue for discussion about this persistent issue.

ORD Researchers Use X-ray Absorption Spectroscopy to Study Lead Pipe Scale

On December 10-12, ORD will examine lead pipe scale samples using X-ray absorption spectroscopy (XAS) at the Advanced Photon Source at Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont, IL. The researchers will use these analyses to identify the speciation of lead, iron, and manganese found within the pipe scales. This analysis will help with the characterization of X-ray amorphous materials which have been identified as a component in lead service line (LSL) scales from across the country. How these X-ray amorphous materials interact with drinking water and lead solubility is a critical knowledge gap in predicting water chemistries to minimize lead release.

Department of Defense Sponsors ORD Study on Wildland Fire Emissions

U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) has awarded a project on *The Effect of Fuel Characteristics and Fire Dynamics on Emissions, Dispersion, and Air Quality Impacts* to an ORD/OAQPS team. The goal of this three-year, \$1.9-million project is to link wildland fire emissions production and dispersion in the near-plume environment to heterogeneity in fuels, firing methods, resultant fire dynamics and intensity, and convective structures. The team also includes scientists from U.S. Forest Service, Los Alamos National Laboratory, University of North Carolina, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Tall Timbers Research Station.

EnviroAtlas New Additions

ORD is adding data for three new urban areas to EnviroAtlas: Washington, DC; St. Louis, MO; and Los Angeles County, CA. Urban areas featured in EnviroAtlas are selected based on environmental and human health data availability, population size, geography, and regional interest. Urban/community scale data can be used by community leaders and citizens to inform decisions related to planning, transportation, green infrastructure, parks and greenways, children's health, and more.

Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee Reviews EPA Assessments

This week, the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) is meeting in Cary, NC, to discuss and review CASAC's Draft Report on OAR's Policy Assessment for Particulate Matter, CASAC's peer review of ORD's Integrated Science Assessment for Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants (External Review Draft - September 2019), and CASAC's peer review of OAR's Policy Assessment for the Review of the Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (External Review Draft - October 2019).

Upcoming Major Decisions and Events

Inaugural Conference on New Approach Methods for Reducing Animal Testing for Chemical Safety

EPA will host its first annual conference on the State of the Science on Development and Use of New Approach Methods (NAMs) for Chemical Safety Testing on December 17. The conference is an EPA commitment outlined in the September 10 memo from Administrator Wheeler titled "[Directive to Prioritize Efforts to Reduce Animal Testing](#)." During the conference, on-site participants will exchange information about scientific advancements in the NAMs field to develop a common understanding of the state of the science, discuss approaches for developing scientific confidence in using alternatives, and summarize existing studies characterizing uncertainties in results from animal testing. The conference will include presentations by U.S. and international scientific experts to inform EPA, interested stakeholders, and the general public on NAM advancements.

Cranberry Bog Restoration Workshop

On December 13, scientists from ORD's Atlantic Coastal Environmental Sciences Division working on the Nutrients Translational Science Pilot Project will host a Cranberry Bog Restoration Workshop in partnership with the Barnstable Clean Water Coalition and The Nature Conservancy. The workshop will be held in Barnstable, Massachusetts and will include stakeholders from the community, local governments, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and more. The goal of the workshop is to give guidance on ways to convert abandoned cranberry bogs into nitrogen-reducing natural habitats that can mitigate high levels of nitrogen in the Cape Cod region.

Science Technology Policy Council (STPC)

On December 11, the STPC will hold its quarterly meeting. Agenda items include updates on public access and a proposal from the Risk Assessment Forum.

HEI Energy EPA-Industry Meeting

On December 16, HEI Energy will hold a meeting with EPA and its industry sponsors in Washington, DC, to discuss its multi-year work plan and a draft of its upcoming exposure study RFA. HEI Energy is an EPA-industry partnership to fund research on the potential health risks of unconventional oil and gas development.

Office of WaterHot Topics**Waters of the United States**

This week, EPA sent the draft final rule to revise the definition of Waters of the United States to OP for OMB review. The rule is the second step in the two-step rulemaking process to implement Executive Order 13778, “Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the ‘Waters of the United States’ Rule.” EPA anticipates an expedited interagency review of the final rule in order to sign the rule in January.

Fourth Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List

This week, OMB initiated review for the draft Federal Register notice announcing and requesting comment on the EPA’s preliminary determinations to regulate two contaminants (i.e., perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)) with a national primary drinking water regulation (NPDWR) and to not regulate six other contaminants (i.e., 1,1-dichloroethane, acetochlor, methyl bromide (bromomethane), metolachlor, nitrobenzene, and RDX) with an NPDWR.

National Drinking Water Advisory Council Meeting

This week, OW held the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC) at EPA headquarters. The meeting includes consultations under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) on revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule and on a national primary drinking water regulation for perchlorate. Other topics for discussion include EPA’s Water Workforce Initiative, the National Water Reuse Action Plan, and updates on efforts to reduce health-based drinking water violations at community water systems. The NDWAC was established by the SDWA to provide advice, information, and recommendations on matters related to activities, functions, policies, and regulations of the EPA under the SDWA. The Council consists of 15 members from state and local agencies, private groups and organizations concerned with public water supply, and the general public.

Upcoming Major Decisions and Events**Oklahoma Governor’s Water Conference and Research Symposium**

This week, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator Anna Wildeman will speak on a panel regarding Federal OW initiatives at the 40th Annual Oklahoma Governor’s Water Conference and Research Symposium in Midwest City, OK. Open to press.